MASTER PIMMES SPEECH TO THE LORDS IN PARLIAMENT,

Sitting in Westminster Hall, the twelfth of Aprill, 1641.

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My Lords,

THere hath beene much time ſpent to prove our Charge, and your Lordſhips have heard my Lord of Straffords defence with as much patience. You have alſo heard our Evidence ſummed up whereby we have proved that he hath by trayterous words, Counſels and actions, trayterouſly endevoured to ſubvert the fundamentall Lawes of *England* and *Ireland*, and in ſtead thereof, to introduce an arbitrary and tyrannicall government againſt Law. This (my Lords) is that poyſonous Arrow that hath tainted his bloud, this is that Cup of deadly wine that hath intoxicated him.

My Lords, It comes to my ſhare to ſhew you how miſchievous an Act of Treaſon it is by that Law that he hath appealed unto, which is the ſupreme Law (to wit) publike good, for his Poſition was this, That *Salus populi*, is *Suprema Lex*. All Lawes are derived from

this as its Fountaine, and end heere as its proper Center. And those Actions that are opposite to this are against Law.

First, My Lords, It is such an offence as comprehends all offences, such a Treason as comprehends all treasons.

The earth (my Lords) is a Seminary of all flowers, so is this a Seminary of all offences.

My Lords, this Law puts a difference betwixt good and evill; take away the Law (my Lords) and Nature becomes a Law to it selfe. As Pride will be a Law, Lust will be a Law, Rapine a Law, Treason, a law, which Lawes have ruled in *Ireland* ever since my Lord came thither.

Take away the Kings protection from the people, & you take away the peoples allegiance to the King. Prerogative is the bounds of libertie, and (my Lords) they must not contest one against another.

My Lords, I beseech you consider, ye have all under this custodie; and if you take away this, you take away your goods, liberties and lives.

My Lords, he saith, that *Ireland* was a conquered Nation, why? were not all Nations conquered? *England, Wales*, &c.

The next is this, that it is an offence full of danger to the Kings person and Crown, it nourisheth dissention and tumults in a people. If you consider the histories of the Nations under arbitrary government, you shall find them full of cruelty and bloudy Massacres; yea, if you please to peruse our English histories, you shall finde that when Arbitrary government was set up, how many Kings fell by cruell & bloudy hands, which is fearefull to relate.

Thirdly, my Lords, It is dangerous to the King, First, in respect of his honour, Secondly, in respect of his profit, & Thirdly, in respect of his greatnesse: yet all these have beene put on upon the face of this treason as so many vizards, can it be (my Lords) for the Kings honour, to have his Ministers to lay al the fault upon the King? To kill, to imprison, to use Rapine, to levie warre against his people, and to ruine the State, and then all these dishonourable acts to be layd on the King? Is this for the Kings honour?

Secondly, it is contrary to his profit, for if there be not an affectionate supply from the people to the King, hee can never grow in his revenue.

Nay, this (my Lords) is the Kings most certaine Revenue, that issues from the affection of his people, for other Revenue, as Lands, or the like, are subject to many Inconveniences, to many substractions and pensions, but this is free and wholly to himselfe, these fourteene yeares past, since there hath beene an

unhappy ceſſation of Parliamentary proceedings, the King hath had leſſe revenue, & it doth him leſſe good.

Nay, there hath beene more wanting to the King, than many yeares before. Againe, it is unprofitable, and that is worſe, for the King loſt by it, for it hath coſt him theſe two yeares more than it coſt Queene *Elizabeth* in all her warres in *Ireland* and *Spaine*, yea, (I feare) more than is to be repayred in an age.

Thirdly, in point of greatneſſe, the World is a ſocietie of Kingdomes, and it is not enough for a King to be great at home, but to equall his fellow Princes abroad: Nay to be above them in honour and Majeſtie, in Riches and glory.

But my Lords theſe Counſels of late that have bin given his Majeſty, have rendred him contemptible to his enemies, uſeleſſe to his diſtreſſed friends, and had they not beene prevented, in time would have made him uncapable of any deſigne at home or abroad.

A fourth Conſideration is this, my Lords, it is deſtructive to wealth and valour, it corrupts our peace: and in peace, makes us have the malignities of warre, and for wealth; who will venture his goods, life, his libertie in the way of trading and Commerce, when he knowes not upon the returne of it, whether it be his owne or not.

Nay, my Lords, it imbaſeth the ſpirits, and valour

of a Nation, when they must stand in feare of pilloring, scaffolding, and the like punishments, it makes men to be of base spirits.

Now my Lords, to imbase the Kings Coyne, if it be but sixe pence, or twelve pence, 'tis treason by the Law, and a man must die for it: what is it then to imbase our spirits, my Lords: truly it is a matter of great importance.

Fifthly, it doth disable the King, and makes him unfit to deale with forraigne enemies, for every one thinkes to slip his necke out of the Collar, when he shall be forced to it.

The sixt Consideration is, that it is against the Covenant betwixt the King and his people.

Before my Lords I spoke of a Legall Oath, but now I speake of a personall, for we sweare our allegeance to him, and he the maintenance of our Lawes to us: he is our husband, and we his wife; he is our Father, and we his children; he is to maintaine our liberties, and we his Dignities, and our duties.

And my Lords, *Iustice Thorpe* was condemned and executed, for breaking the Kings Oath: My Lords, he broke not his owne oath, nor did the King breake his oath, and yet for violating that oath, that the King had taken to his Subjects, he suffered.

Ah what an unfortunate man then is the Prisoner at the Barre, that hath in all his Counsels, in all his words, in all his actions, broken the Kings Oath, and as much as in him lay, violently perswaded the King to countenance him in all his actions?

The seventh consideration is this my Lords, it is against the end of government, for the end of government is to preserve men in their estates, lives, and liberties, but an Arbitrary power destroyes all this: the end of government is to advance vertue and goodnesse, and to punish vice: but this cherisheth all disorder.

Now my Lords, I come to shew the vanitie of his excuses, that he hath made for himselfe.

The first is the libertie of giving Counsell, being a Counsellor, true my Lords, he hath this liberty, but its bounded within its lists, & it must be such a Counsell as must stand with the sacred Majesty, & the prosperity and weale of his Subjects, for if Counsell be bad, it poysons the Consciences of Princes, it infects their eares, for all Government proceeds from the Prince, as from a Fountaine; now if the fountaine be poysoned, how can the streames be free?

A second shift is, that hee hopes your Lordships will be carefull to secure your posteritie, and not to admit of this as Treason.

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My Lords, I know your Lordships will be carefull to secure your selves, but by your vertues, not by your vices.

The third excuse is, the goodnesse of his intentions: truly, my Lords, good and evill lye close together, not easily to be discerned, if they be naturall corruptions; but for Murthers, Adultery, Rapines, and Treasons, these are so monstrous, that they may easily be distinguished.

And I cannot be perswaded that ever hee intended well, that acted so ill.

The fourth excuse is the Kings necessities.

My Lords this necessity came from his owne counsels.

A fifth excuse is, that it was for the Kings honour, and the maintenance of the Kings power.

My Lords, it hath beene declared unto you, that the Kings power doth not extend to any thing against Law, by which hee hath sworne to rule us, and to maintaine our Liberties and priviledges for us, and this hath beene declared by five Parliaments, and also will appeare in the case of the Pitition of Right, and in the case of Ship-money.

A sixt is, that hee advised the King to doe it with

moderation and reparation.

My Lords this is a contradiction, for there can bee no reparation for this.

The seventh excuse is, that no horrid facts did follow his Counsels: truly my Lords we thanke God, his sacred Majesty, and his wise Counsell for that, or else God knowes what fearefull things would have befallen us, nor are we free from it as yet.

To conclude, now my Lords, give me leave to entreate you to consider the Treasons ordinarily practised, when the act is done, they cease as in killing that noble King of *France*, and the severall plots against Queene *Elizabeth*, but this treason of my Lord of *Strafford's*, is a standing treason, which when it had beene done, it had beene permanent from generation to generation.

And now my Lords, these Lawes that hee would have overthrown, must now be his Iudges, and hee is to be judg'd by Law, and that law will have marke enough of it to describe it, for it is a Law against such as breake the fundamentall Law of the Kingdome.

And my Lords give me leave to informe you that under favour this is not to make a new way for bloud, nor is the crime of Treason in my Lord of *Strafford* the lesse, because none would venture upon such a horrid Treason, in two hundred and forty yeares.

But

But my Lords, for the making of our Charge good by Law, as wee have fully proved it by Teſtimony, we muſt reſort to Counſell with the houſe of Commons, and truſt to your Lordſhips Iuſtice.

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